

REMARKS

After entry of this Amendment, the pending claims are: claims 7-12, 19-44, 46-48, and 58-63. The Final Office Action dated February 6, 2008 has been carefully considered. Claims 45 and 49-55 were previously canceled without prejudice. As an initial matter the Examiner is thanked for indicating that claims 7-12, 19-44, 46-48, and 58-63 were allowed. Claims 1-6, 13-18, 56 and 57 have been canceled without prejudice. The Applicants explicitly reserved the right to pursue the inventions of claims 1-6, 13-18, 45 and 49-57 in a divisional and/or continuation application. No new matter has been added. Allowance of the pending claims in view of the above Amendments and the following Remarks is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action dated February 6, 2008, the Examiner:

- rejected claims 1-4, 13-15, 17 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,342,057 to Brace et al. ("Brace");
- rejected claims 1, 5, 6, 13, 14, 56 and 57 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Brace;
- rejected claim 16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brace; and
- allowed claims 7-12, 19-44, 46-48, and 58-63.

35 U.S.C. 102(B)/35 U.S.C. 103(A) REJECTIONS IN VIEW OF BRACE

Independent claims 1 and 56, and dependent claims 2-6, 13-18, and 57, have been rejected as being anticipated by Brace. Without addressing the merits of this argument, in an effort to expedite prosecution of the present application, Applicants respectfully cancel claims 1-6, 13-18, 56 and 57 without prejudice. As such these rejections are believed to be moot.

CLAIMS 7-12, 19-44, 46-48 AND 58-63

After cancellation of claims 1-6, 13-18, 56 and 57 the remaining claims – claims 7-12, 19-44, 46-48 and 58-63 – were indicated as being allowed. As such, it is believed that the present application is now in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

No fee is believed due for this submission. If, however, the Commissioner determines otherwise, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees which may now or hereafter be due in this application to Deposit Account No. 19-4709.

In the event that there are any questions, or should additional information be required, please contact Applicants' attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: March 20, 2008

/Giuseppe Molaro/
Giuseppe Molaro
Registration No. 52,039

For: Brian M. Rothery
Registration No. 35,340

Attorney for Applicants
Stroock & Stroock & Lavan LLP
180 Maiden Lane
New York, New York 10038
(212) 806-6114